



U.S. Department of Justice
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District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

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GRAND JURY RETURNS INDICTMENTS

Wichita, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that nine individuals were indicted on December 17, 2003, by a federal grand jury in Wichita, Kansas. Those indicted include:

- ! **Prince Albert Deshawn White**, 22, Wichita, Kansas, currently in custody, is charged with one count of robbing the Sunflower Bank, 6224 Shady Brook, Wichita, Kansas, on December 12, 2003.

An affidavit filed with the court alleges that on December 12, 2003, White entered the Sunflower Bank, grabbed a customer and threatened to shoot the customer if the bank teller did not meet his demands, however, White did not display a gun. The affidavit alleges that the teller placed the money in a blue plastic bag and that White took the money and ran from the bank. The affidavit further alleges that officers with the Wichita Police Department observed White running from the area and, following a foot chase, White was arrested.

If convicted, White faces a maximum of twenty years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Wichita Police Department and the FBI.

- ! **Marico M. LaFlora**, 22, Lompoc, California, currently in custody, is charged with one count of robbing the State Bank of Colwich, 2055 N. Woodlawn, Wichita, Kansas, with a handgun on July 14, 2000, and one count of brandishing a handgun during the robbery of the State Bank of Colwich on July 14, 2000.

If convicted, LaFlora faces a maximum of twenty-five years in federal prison, without parole, for bank robbery and a minimum of twenty-five years for brandishing a handgun during the bank robbery. The case was investigated by the FBI and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch.

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- ! **Edwin R. Shuler**, 60, Arkansas City, Kansas, is charged with three counts of making a false, fictitious or fraudulent statement to the United States Veterans Administration (VA) from May 8, 2002, through August 7, 2002.

The indictment alleges that to be eligible for VA pension benefits a veteran's income could not exceed \$8,778 in 1999 or \$8,989 in 2000. The indictment alleges that to receive a VA pension a veteran must disclose to the Veterans Administration the veteran's income from all sources. The indictment further alleges that in 1999 Shuler was employed and received \$20,225.99 in wages; in 2000 Shuler was employed and received \$13,971.39 in wages; and in 2001 Shuler received a worker's compensation settlement in the amount of \$45,000 and was also employed. The indictment further alleges that on three occasions from May 8, 2002, through August 7, 2002, Shuler made false statements to the United States Veterans Administration when he claimed to have only \$10,000 in income in 1999 and no income in 2000 or 2001.

If convicted, Shuler faces a maximum of five years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Veterans Administration, Office of Inspector General and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Alan Metzger.

- ! **Roger D. Tucker**, 42, address unknown, currently in custody, is charged with one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm on January 23, 2003, and one count of being a felon in possession of ammunition on September 18, 2003, in Sedgwick County, Kansas.

If convicted, Tucker faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matt Treaster.

- ! **Benton G. Baskin**, 33, Wichita, Kansas, currently in custody, is charged with one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm on September 25, 2003, in Sedgwick County, Kansas.

If convicted, Baskin faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Wichita Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mona Furst.

- ! **Eduardo Sillas-Cebreros**, 26, and **Mario Meza-Lopez**, 33, both of Phoenix, Arizona, both in custody, are each charged with one count of possession with the intent to distribute 500 grams or more (1.1 pounds or more) of cocaine on November 23, 2003, and one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 500 grams or more (1.1 pounds or more) of cocaine on November 23, 2003, in Kiowa County, Kansas.

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If convicted, each face a minimum of five years and a maximum of forty years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Kiowa County Sheriff's Office and the

Drug Enforcement Administration.

! **David J. Phaneuf**, 26, and **Donald D. Casey**, 38, both of Walsh, Colorado, both in custody, are each charged with one count of attempting to manufacture methamphetamine; one count of possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; two counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm; and one count of carrying a firearm during a drug trafficking crime; all on December 6, 2003, in Finney County, Kansas.

If convicted, each face a minimum of five years and a maximum of forty years in federal prison, without parole, on the drug charges; a maximum of ten years for being a felon in possession of a firearm; and a minimum of five years for carrying a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. The case was investigated by the Finney County Sheriff's Office, the Garden City Police Department, and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch.

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Indictments filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.